



THE 3 R'S BLOG

READING, 'RITING, AND RANDOMNESS

IT'S NOT JUST A TITLE, IT'S A MISSION STATEMENT.

The Front Page

[About Me and My Blog](#)

[Book Review Index: by Title](#)

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[Popular/Favorite Posts](#)

This blog uses the [Intense Debate](#) comment system, but sometimes it get cranky and doesn't let people leave comments! If you can't get a comment to post, feel free to e-mail me your thoughts at **3.rsblog AT Gmail DOT com** and I'll post them for you.



Gypsy, 1997-2010



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2010 Memory Walk, October 23

alzheimer's association



Help me fight Alzheimers - [Walk with us in Thousand Oaks!](#)

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2010

Week-End Review: Links & whatnot

First the whatnot, then the links...

A good conference requires plenty of planning, so it's smart to start early. And even if you're not sure you'll be *going* to a particular conference, if they're asking for input on the programming, you might as well give 'em your

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ideas!

I really want to attend the 2nd [Book Blogger Convention](#) in New York next May, and their [request for topic suggestions](#) (anonymous) is still open. This year's convention will be organized as a series of workshops on several tracks, which will provide more options for attendees and speak to a variety of interests...kind of like BlogHer does.

At this point, I'm still iffy about going to BlogHer for the third consecutive year, but since BlogHer'11 in August will be practically local (in San Diego) it seems wrong to pass it up! They've announced their [Call for Ideas \(first round\) for the 2011 conference](#) (open until October 31) and the programming tracks to be filled:

Skills path 1: The Social Media Geek

This is BlogHer's technical track. We want content for all levels: beginning, intermediate and advanced. What do you want to learn, related to your blog or other social media platforms?

Skills path 2: The Write Brain

This is BlogHer's writing track. Content still is queen in our books, so we're looking for professional-grade writing instructors and coaches.

Skills path 3: Minding Your Own Business

This is BlogHer's professional and career track. Blogs provide a personal platform and a professional platform. They can be online portfolio, resume, or thought leadership forum.

Impact path 1: Change the World

This is BlogHer's activism, politics and social change track. Many of you are raising your voice, using your social media footprint to rally others, raising awareness and galvanizing action towards political action or in support of social causes.

Impact path 2: Changing Yourself

This is BlogHer's personal track. Many in our community continue to blog as a personal



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More from BlogHer

But Mr. Mister
really was on the
radio

Dr. Champ:

Episode 1

Actor Peter

Facinelli reads

Breaking Dawn

scripts

Announcing

BlogHer's Virtual
Conference Pass!

More from iVillage

Easy Recipes with
5 Ingredients

BOOKS I HAVEN'T READ YET

Welcome to
TBR Purgatory



Foreign Tongue: A
Novel of Life and
Love in Paris by
Vanina Marsot



A Summer Affair: A
Novel by Elin
Hilderbrand



Eclipse (Twilight,
Book 3) by
Stephenie Meyer



Keeping the House:
A Novel by Ellen
Baker



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Florinda
Ventura County,
California

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Harry, A History: The True Story of a Boy Wizard, His Fans, and Life Inside the Harry Potter Phenomenon by Melissa Anelli




Girls in Trucks by Katie Crouch



Beginner's Luck: A Novel (Ballantine Reader's Circle) by Laura Pedersen



Arlington Park: A Novel by Rachel Cusk

 Powered by LibraryThing

BOOK REVIEW RATING SCALE

1-5 points, fractional points are given

1-2: Read something else instead
2-3: Just OK for me
3-4: Pretty darn good, and worth your time
4-5: Excellent and recommended!

pursuit, We use our blogs to explore who we are, what we love and the nature of online community and support.

At this point in the process, you do not have to be registered or committed to attend BlogHer'11 to [submit a session idea](#) (but you will have to provide your name and e-mail).

Yes, I will be submitting ideas for both Book Blogger Con (already done) and BlogHer'11 (if I can come up with one!). And if you'd be interested in co-presenting something at BlogHer, *definitely* let me know!

[Twitter call-out of the week](#): "Your book needs to sound a LOT better than your pitch if your e-mail opens with 'Dear Book Blogger.'" (*Also, BCC is your friend.*) [Best response to call-out, from @ReadingVacation](#): "Even I know better than that and I'm a kid." I actually felt a little wrong about that tweet, but I didn't name names and I wasn't the only one with that opinion. But honestly, those two easy fixes just might score more positive responses to your pitches (no matter what you're pitching)! And if you need a little more help, [check this out: book bloggers who make it their business to help you connect.](#)

October has become [the "pink month" for breast cancer](#) (awareness, screening, research, fundraising, etc.) Not to take anything away from that, but I'd like to inject a dash of **purple** for my personal health cause - **Alzheimer's disease**. Today is the eleventh anniversary of my mother's death from early-onset Alzheimer's. I wrote about [that, an Alzheimer's-themed must-read book, and my participation in Memory Walk](#) on Monday; I hope you'll check that post out now if you haven't already. I post a variation on it every year around this time, partly for power readers, but mostly

THE 3 R'S BLOG: A HISTORY

▼ 2010 (228)

▼ October 2010 (7)

Week-End Review: Links & whatnot

(Banned) Book Talk: *Forever*, by Judy Blume

(Banned) Book Talk: *Speak*, by Laurie Halse Ander...

Weekend Assignment #338: In Another World...

Walk with me, and remember: Mom, Alice, and Alzhei...

Sunday Salon/Weekly Geeks: Readathon plans, and ot...

That's Enough, Thanks! Songs I never need to hear ...

► September 2010 (25)

► August 2010 (24)

► July 2010 (23)

► June 2010 (26)

► May 2010 (22)

► April 2010 (28)

► March 2010 (25)

► February 2010 (24)

► January 2010 (24)

► 2009 (320)

► 2008 (428)

► 2007 (332)

EVENTS HOSTED AT THE 3 R'S:



THE 3 R'S BLOG: FILED UNDER -

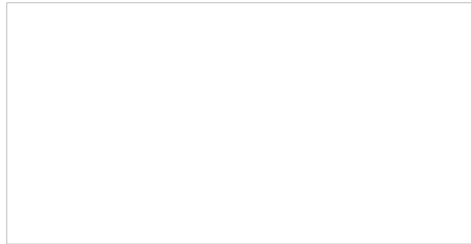
'riting Armchair BEA BBAW blog



this time, partly for newer readers, but mostly because it continues to be important to me.

The **Memory Walk** takes place in two weeks - on **Saturday, October 23** (which is also National [Make a Difference Day](#) - and here's one way you can!). A few loyal **3 R's** readers have kindly donated to help our team's fundraising efforts for the cause - I've thanked them privately, but wanted to share their generosity publicly as well!

And now, on to the linkage...



Speaking (again) of cancer: if you know what it's like, [Miss Britt would like you to help her understand it](#) so she can help someone else who's experiencing it.

Following recent reports of youth suicides in reaction to bullying, [a mother defines it as everyone's problem](#); [a former victim survivor reflects](#); and the **MOMocrats** declare a "Stop the Bullying" Blog Action to coincide with National Coming Out Day (Monday, October 11) and Anti-Bullying Month. Also: [some "mean girls" don't outgrow it](#)

More echoes of Banned Books Week: [one librarian's hypothetical argument with a censorship advocate](#), and another's [exploration of real-life library decisions to stock, or not to stock, certain books](#).

Blogging on blogging: [Passion, Reason, and Experience](#); and are [comments merely a tool for self-promotion](#)? (Personally, I'd say [they're much more than that](#)...however, linking back to your own posts just might be the *slightest bit* self-promotional. But then again, I think self-promotion is allowed when it's your own blog.)

Lighter reading: Could ["Christian Zombie"](#) be the next hot genre trend in publishing? Also: [books for the bathroom: everything that Katie \(my 16-year-](#)

tour Blogging Authors Reading Challenge BlogHer09 BlogHer10 **book bloggers** contests and giveaways family fiction guest post holidays LA Moms Blog links **memes and blogger games** mostly true stories NaBloPoMo nerd factor news traffic and weather nonfiction one book at a time pop culture: movies pop culture: music pop culture: TV **randomness** reading reviews roundup RYOB Challenge site stuff So Cal Sunday Salon TBIF Ten on Tuesday thinking out loud travel Tuesday Tangents Weekend Assignment Weekend Review Weekly Geeks Women Unbound Reading Challenge work

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POPULAR POSTS THIS MONTH

Sunday Salon:
(Banned)
Books I've Read
I'll be lurking

PAGEVIEWS THIS MONTH

8,097

RECENT COMMENTS

the bathroom, everything that [Katie \(my 16-year-old\)](#) hated about ***Mockingjay*** (spoilers galore for the six people who haven't read it yet!)

And one last whatnot:

** Are you participating in the [24-Hour Readathon](#) this weekend? Listen to some Beatles music while you're reading! Tomorrow would have been [John Lennon's 70th birthday](#), and I'll have iTunes playing in the background - I have a dedicated Beatles playlist. And speaking of the Readathon: If you're a participant and your name falls into my assigned group (N-Sh), I'll be stopping by your blog to help keep you motivated during one of my [Cheerleader](#) shifts! And after all that, I'm planning a few days off the blog early next week for recovery, but I'll be posting tomorrow and Sunday.



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Comments (0)

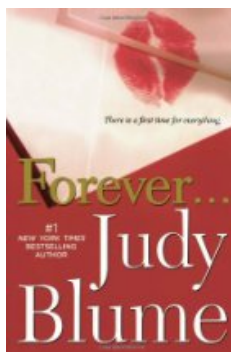
Posted by Florinda Posted at 5:00 AM

, [Link love for this post:](#)

File under: [links](#), [randomness](#), [roundup](#), [Weekend Review](#)

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2010

(Banned) Book Talk: *Forever*, by Judy Blume



Forever...

[Judy Blume](#)

Originally published 1975

This edition: Simon Spotlight Entertainment (2007), Paperback (ISBN 1416953914 / 9781416953913)

Fiction (YA), 208 pages

Source: personal copy (purchased)

Reason for Reading: Re-read for Banned Books Week 2010

Opening Lines: "Sybil Davison has a genius IQ and has been laid by at least six different guys. She told me so herself, the last time she was visiting her cousin, Erica, who is my good friend. Erica says

for you! Are you lurking for me?

Book Talk: *The Lonely Polygamist*, by Brady Udall...

BBAW 2010: Forgotten

Treasures -

Books

Remembered ...

BBAW: New

Treasures -

Book Blog

Discoveries

The last comments for **(Banned) Book Talk: *Forever*, by Judy Blume**

Emily

I probably read Forever in the early 80s, as a 12 or 13 yo. Yep, the book was secretly passed around...

» 2 hours ago [Jump to →](#)

florinda3rs 90p

I think it's wishful thinking - or denial. Honestly, I was probably a little too young when I first...

» 16 hours ago [Jump to →](#)

bermudaonion 65p

I've never read this book, but it sounds appropriate for older teens to me. People who think teens...

» 20 hours ago [Jump to →](#)

florinda3rs 90p

I'm with you on that, to be honest - whose idea was THAT?

» 1 day ago [Jump to →](#)

The last comments for **Weekend Assignment #338: In Another World...**

florinda3rs 90p

When it came down to it, I'd probably find some reason not to go, but sometimes it sounds like a...

» 1 day ago [Jump to →](#)

Comments by [IntenseDebate](#)

this is because of Sybil's fat problem and her need to feel loved - the getting laid part, that is. The genius IQ is just luck or genes or something."

Book Description: The saga of Katherine's and Michael's love is a joyous one, filled with all the wonder of "the first time." They meet on New Year's Eve and become completely involved with each other. It's an idyllic affair —until they're separated that summer... *(Follow that link for more information and enlightenment on how this novel came to be written.)*

Comments: It's pretty obvious early on just why this book has been challenged or banned so many times - it's, quite frankly, the sex, and this novel is quite frank about sex, specifically as it concerns teenagers. **Forever...** is a novel about a first-love relationship, and writing about that without factoring in sex would be, frankly, dishonest. Even in these days of "abstinence-only" sex education, sex is going to be an issue in teens' relationships; at the very least, there will be conversations about why they're *not* going to have it or how far they'll go with each other without *actually* having it.

I first read **Forever...** just a few years after its original publication (plus a few more times after that), and I think it was very influential for women of my generation. At the time, it seemed like one of the most "adult" young-adult books I'd ever read, and not just because of its subject matter (frank, yes, but all things considered, not overly graphic); it didn't shy away from the complexities, it didn't talk down to its readers, and it's one of the first books I remember reading that didn't have a neatly tied-up ending (which has become something I appreciate in novels, most of the time).

Given my prior relationship with the book, I'm finding it difficult to be objective about how it's held up over time; enough of it has stayed with me that reading it again was a bit of a time-travel experience, and may have made it feel more current and relevant than it really is. And to be honest, there are some aspects that seem a bit dated. But the central themes of the book still seem to matter: sex and emotion are tied

together, and early sexual experiences ideally happen within a loving relationship; the people in the relationship need to communicate openly and not play power games with each other; becoming sexually involved is an adult-level decision, and an adult level of responsibility is attached; there's more to an adult relationship than sex - assuming that the course of your life is set *forever* by the time you're eighteen is a risky proposition, because you may not really be ready for the rest of it yet. (Learn that one the hard way, I did.)

Having said that, there were things in the writing itself that I don't think I even noticed as a younger reader, but got to me on this reading. There are aspects of the novel I still appreciate - Katherine's relationship with her parents, the mostly non-judgmental attitudes, the matter-of-fact approach to sex and contraception ("safe sex" meant different things in the pre-HIV days when this book was originally written). However, while Blume's tracing of the trajectory of Katherine and Michael's relationship is convincing, I didn't really feel that the characters themselves were all that developed, and the excessive use of ellipses in the dialogue just irritated me. (Granted, I'm an offender in that manner sometimes myself, and I know people tend to pause when they're talking; but I don't know if it's necessary to convey that in *writing* their talking.) And seriously, has any guy ever given his penis a first name of its own? "Mr. Happy" seems to be good enough for most of them...

I think that ***Forever...*** is still an important book, and I'm glad I revisited it during Banned Books Week. I think it's a modern classic that deserves continued reading, and I think that it will continue to be banned and challenged for as long as it's around.

Rating: 3.5/5



Buy ***Forever...*** from an Independent Bookseller



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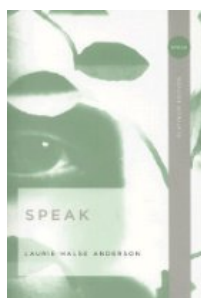
Posted by Florinda Posted at 5:00 AM

, [Link love for this post:](#)

File under: fiction, one book at a time, reading, reviews

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2010

(Banned) Book Talk: **Speak, by Laurie Halse Anderson**



Speak

[Laurie Halse Anderson](#)

Original copyright 1999

This edition: Penguin Platinum,
2006, Paperback (ISBN
0142407321 / 9780142407325)

Fiction (YA), 197 pages

Source: Purchased/personal copy

Reason for Reading: Banned Books Week 2010

Opening Lines: "It is my first morning of high school. I have seven new notebooks, a skirt I hate, and a stomachache."

Book description: Melinda Sordino busted an end-of-summer party by calling the cops. Now her old friends won't talk to her, and people she doesn't even know hate her from a distance. The safest place to be is alone, inside her own head. But even that's not safe. Because there's something she's trying not to think about, something about the night of the party that, if she let it in, would blow her carefully constructed disguise to smithereens. And then she would have to speak the truth.

Comments: When the recent [controversy over this novel](#) erupted shortly before Banned Books Week,

it had the opposite of its intended effect, as these things often do; rather than warn me away from the book, it piqued my interest (and *seriously* ticked me off). I'd already heard a lot of good things about Laurie Halse Anderson as an author, but hadn't sampled her writing yet - I felt like I had an incentive now. I'm a bit regretful that this is what it took to get me to read this powerfully affecting novel, but I'm glad that I've done it nonetheless.

Anderson has given her protagonist, Melinda, an authentic and compelling adolescent voice, particularly considering that she's a girl who rarely talks. She's not prepared to explain her actions or defend herself against the judgment of Merryweather High School - including the girls who had been her best friends up until the end of that summer - and no one wants to talk to her anyway (except for that desperate-to-fit-in new girl, Heather), so why bother? But Melinda has a lot to say all the same as she views her peers from the outside...and struggles with what's going on on the inside.

A Q&A with the author at the end of the edition I read discusses *Speak* as a novel that's primarily about *depression*, and as someone who has been challenged by that condition myself, it's not hard to recognize that. One layperson's definition of depression is "anger turned inward," and that seems to fit Melinda. She is justifiably angry over things that have happened to her and around her, but doesn't see a way to express that anger safely...and so, she tries to shut it down and pull away. But eventually everyone reaches a point where they can't live that way anymore; however, they don't all react the same way once they get there. I was anxious to see how Melinda would find her way and where she'd end up; I wanted to see her find and use her voice.

I can't talk about *Speak* without addressing the plot point that raised all furor over it, and which I assume by now is not a spoiler: yes, Melinda is a teenage girl who is raped by someone she knows, and that act is the catalyst of the story. There is nothing at all sexy about this; it's told in very spare prose that conveys shock and fear more than

anything else. It is emphatically not pornographic. However, if the mischaracterization of and uproar over the novel served to introduce it to more readers, it's not all bad. *Speak* is an eloquent and emotionally true novel, and it truly does "speak." It has important things to say, and it says them very well.

Rating: 4/5

Many book bloggers chose to read *Speak* during Banned Books Week for the same reasons that I did, so you'll find [many other reviews](#). I'm asking you to read at least one of them: what [Wendy \(Literary Feline\) had to say about it](#) vividly points out why this book and others like it matter. I am awed by her courage and glad that she's my friend.

This book counts for the Read Your Own Books Challenge (12/20)



Buy **Speak** from an Independent Bookseller (I am an IndieBound Affiliate)



Buy **Speak** from Amazon.com (I am an Amazon Associate)



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this • Comments (8)

Posted by Florinda Posted at 5:00 AM

, [Link love for this post](#):

File under: fiction, one book at a time, reading, reviews, RYOB Challenge

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 5, 2010

Weekend Assignment #338: In Another World...



"Goldilocks planet" illustration by Lynette Cook,
National Science Foundation.

Weekend Assignment # 338: A World of Their Own

Even as astronomers discover planets that may be capable of supporting life, such destinations remain out of reach of would-be human colonists, even if the world is "only" twenty light years away. But if some science fictional technology were discovered in the next year or two (warp drive, matter transmission or whatever) that made it possible to leave Earth behind and go live on another planet, would you be tempted to do so? If you choose not to relocate, would you be interested in just visiting the place instead?

Extra Credit: *If you did go, whether on vacation or as a colonist, and you were only allowed to bring one small suitcase with you, what would be in it?*

Karen said that this Assignment was inspired by the response to a link someone shared on

Facebook about [the discovery of a "Goldilocks planet."](#) That's a planet whose orbit around its sun makes it not too hot, not too cold, but potentially "just right" for life to develop.

It's funny that someone would ask that question, actually. There have been several times recently when current events - and the public response to some of them - have provoked me to tell my husband "That's it. I want to move to a new planet." Beam me up, Scotty - there's no intelligent life left on *this* one. Yes, I am well aware that's a *Star Trek* misquote...but it was one of my favorite bumper stickers once upon a time. I am also well aware it's not *completely* true, but hear me out.

My grandparents and great-grandparents were part of the wave of European immigrants who came to this country in the early 20th century with hopes of a better life for their families. I've moved across the USA a few times myself, accompanied by similarly hopeful feelings - but it gets harder to hold on to them as the world around us seems to get crazier by the day. Governments can't govern, schools can't educate, people can't find jobs or keep their homes, the rich gets richer and the poor gets poorer. People seem to pull further apart in what they believe is right, rallying those who agree tightly around them and screaming at the others across the ever-widening gap.

I'm not sure that "[Rally to Restore Sanity](#)" is going to take, unfortunately (although I sure wish I were going!) - and since I really don't know where else on *this* planet I'd want to live, I guess my best option is another one entirely.

I just wouldn't want to be one of the first to arrive on the new planet - I'm not much for roughing it, and I wouldn't want to go there before there was some infrastructure in place. And some decent food. I'd bring some of my own books, of course, to read when I wasn't working to help develop our new home (it might take the Internet some time to arrive).

Then again, there might *already* some intelligent life on this new planet. If they're smart enough

not to let us come there...well, I guess we'd just have to make it work down here. Somehow, we humans have managed to do that for thousands of years already, and odds are we probably still can. It just might be kind of crazy for a while first.

But yeah, I be up for going to this Goldilocks planet and giving it a try. What about you?

If you'd like to participate in this Weekend Assignment, just post your response on your own blog by 12:01 AM this Thursday, October 7 - you can find the guidelines on [this week's lead post](#).



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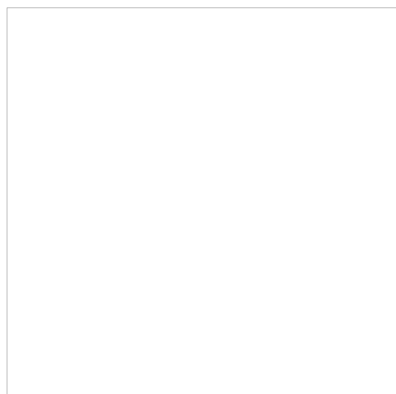
Posted by Florinda Posted at 5:00 AM

, [Link love for this post](#):

File under: 'riting, thinking out loud, Weekend Assignment

MONDAY, OCTOBER 4, 2010

Walk with me, and remember: Mom, Alice, and Alzheimer's



This Friday, October 8, it will be eleven years since my mom, Mary Ann, passed away. A resident of St. Petersburg, Florida for 22 years, she

was 69 years old at the time of her death. She was survived by her husband, two adult daughters, and one teenage grandson. We're left to remember.

But our family had lost her well before that. For over seven years, she had been living in a nursing home, incapacitated by early-onset Alzheimer's disease. We had begun to see changes in her health, demeanor, and personality when she was in her late 50's - sudden weight loss, strange sleeping habits, difficulty in speaking, disengagement with her family and surroundings, paranoia and hallucinations - but her long-

standing fear of doctors and medications caused her to resist our efforts to get her to seek help. My sister and I had both moved away, and distance and the demands of our own lives limited what we could do about this, and my dad was uninformed and afraid to force the issue. By the time she reached the point where something *had* to be done, there wasn't a realistic alternative to round-the-clock care for her, and we all next several years were spent in a form of limbo. By the time she died, much of our grieving had been long underway; Alzheimer's doesn't take the body quickly, but it *does* take the intangibles that make a person unique and special.

We've missed Mom for a very long time now. We miss having her there to listen to and support us. We miss being able to make her laugh. We miss the qualities that made her who she was.

We also miss her because she's missed so much of *our* lives. I'm glad that before she got sick, she did get to spend a lot of time with my then-young son - but she doesn't know that at 26, he seems to have made a pretty successful emergence into adulthood. She was there for the beginning of my first marriage, but I'm actually *not* sorry she missed all the drama and trauma of the ending, although I wish she were able to know my second husband - I know he'd be able to make her laugh a lot. My sister has married and become mother to two wonderful boys - the first born just a few months after his grandmother died - and it's been hard for her that Mom hasn't been here to share in that.

As long as I've had this blog, I've posted a remembrance somewhere near the anniversary of Mom's death. Last year, I did some reading in addition to writing. [Lisa Genova's novel *Still Alice*](#) is the vivid and moving story of Alice Howland, an early-onset Alzheimer's patient; told from Alice's own perspective, it's both deeply affecting and highly informative, and a genuine must-read.

What I remember about the onset and progress of my mom's condition is a lot like what Alice is going through as the novel opens. Alice is 50 years

old, the mother of three grown children and a prominent professor of psychology and linguistics at Harvard, when she finds herself lost and disoriented while out running one day. She's been forgetful lately too,



but she's been attributing her mental lapses and other slip-ups to menopause and "normal" aging; now she wonders if it's something else. After she sees a neurologist, she learns that it is indeed something else; her tests come back indicating a probable diagnosis of early-onset Alzheimer's, and a genetic screening confirms that she does have the accompanying mutation. Drugs are prescribed that may help slow the progression, but Alzheimer's is incurable and unstoppable, and Alice's life will never be the same. Little by little, and all too soon, she will lose nearly everything that has made her who she is.

Lisa Genova, a neuroscientist by training who originally self-published ***Still Alice***, does a remarkable job of truly getting inside the mind and emotions of an Alzheimer's patient. She includes a lot of real information about the disease and its effects in ways that don't distract from the story, and she effectively captures its disruption and alteration of family, career, and daily life, but the fact that it's all told from Alice's perspective makes it unique and unforgettable. The reactions of Alice's family and colleagues to her condition rang true, but Genova makes the reader grasp Alice's *own* reactions too. The instances where the author "loops" an episode by repeating its opening paragraphs at the end, and when she frames Alice's behavior with someone else's response to it, do an especially good job of illustrating what's happening *and* making the reader connect with it.

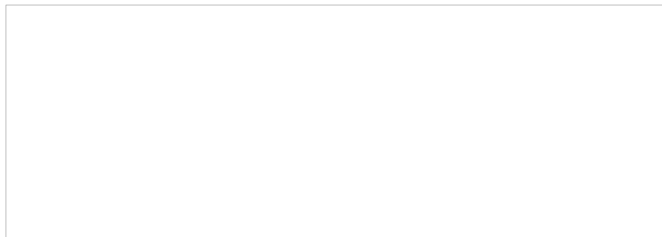
I had held off on reading ***Still Alice*** because I was pretty sure it would be a difficult book for me, emotionally - and it was, but not quite in the way I expected it to be. It got under my skin, and I still think about it nearly a year later. It made me sad, although it didn't make me cry; but more than that, it *scared the hell* out of me. I was engrossed and moved by Alice's story, and I feel that it gave me a lot of insight into Alzheimer's that I didn't

have before - but knowing more has made me *more* afraid of experiencing this than I was before, too. I'm just a few years younger than Alice, and not much younger than my mom was when she began to slip away - and I DO NOT WANT THIS to happen to me.

Alzheimer's became part of my family's life almost twenty years ago. It was never invited - it's an unwelcome visitor that doesn't leave until it gets what it came for. In our case, that was my mother.

The return of that visitor is one of my greatest fears, and I want to do whatever I can to keep it away.

There's one more thing I do to remember my mom every October. In addition to the reading and the blogging, I will once again be joining my sister, her children, our husbands, and my stepchildren (none of whom ever knew our mother) in the [Alzheimer's Memory Walk](#) to raise money for and awareness of this still-incurable, life-altering disease.



The **Thousand Oaks (CA) Memory Walk will take place on Saturday, October 23 at Conejo Creek Park** (behind the Thousand Oaks Public Library), beginning at 9 AM. The 5K route goes through the park and some pleasant residential neighborhoods nearby. If you're in the area - Ventura County, northern Los Angeles County, southern Central Coast - I'm inviting you to [join our team and walk with us](#)! If you can't do that, I hope you'll consider helping me with my [fundraising efforts](#). Funds raised are used to encourage Alzheimer's research and support Alzheimer's patients and their caregivers. Currently more than 5 million Americans have Alzheimer's, and 78 million baby boomers are at risk - unless we find a way to change the course of

this disease.

I remember my mother every day, and I can't forget what took her away from us too soon.



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Posted by Florinda Posted at 5:00 AM

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File under: family, mostly true stories, randomness, thinking out loud

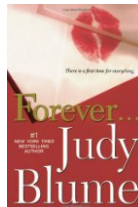
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2010

Sunday Salon/Weekly Geeks: Readathon plans, and other items on the reading agenda



I don't have a theme for this Sunday's Salon - I'm a bit random this week.

HELD OVER - Banned Books Week:



After reading Laurie Halse Anderson's ***Speak***, I've decided to stretch out [Banned Books Week](#) a little longer and pull out two

books I'd set aside for my failed [Shelf Discovery Challenge](#). ***Forever...*** by Judy Blume and ***A Wrinkle in Time*** by Madeleine L'Engle are very different from each other, but they've both been challenged or banned many, many times; while I've read them both more than once, it's been years since I picked up either one. While I intended to re-read both last fall for Shelf Discovery, I never got around to it...and Banned Books Week struck me as an even more appropriate occasion to revisit them. Reviews of all three books will be coming soon.

Walking Behind the Book Bandwagon:

I'm not sure I would have read *Speak* at this time without all the



banned-book conversation about it, but sometimes I'm less readily swayed by book talk. During the last couple of weeks, almost everyone who hasn't been reading and talking about *Speak* has been reading and talking about ***Room*** by Emma Donoghue. I'm seriously ambivalent about that novel, however, despite all the praise I've seen about it. I expect that I will end up reading it at some point, and when I do, I'll wonder why I resisted for so long...I may, once again, experience the "hundreds of book bloggers could be wrong, but not this time" reaction I did when I (finally) read *The Help* or *The Hunger Games*. But I always have some reason for being a wallflower at the hot-book party. With *Room*, while I wouldn't say that I find the premise, and the five-year-old narrator, truly off-putting, neither appeals to me very much, and for once, I'm trying to let that outweigh the "everyone's reading and loving it" factor. The child narrator is the bigger obstacle for me, to be honest, even though I understand Donoghue pulls it off very well. Despite that, I'll be a holdout on this one - *someone* has to be the last to read it, anyway.

Sources of Future Reading - Bookseller Trade-Show Season:

I've read several accounts of the [SIBA \(Southern Independent Bookseller Alliance\) trade show](#) during the last week, and I'm expecting to see some posts soon about the [GLIBA \(Great Lakes Independent Bookseller Association\) trade show](#), which is being held next weekend in Michigan. This must be the time of year for events like this, because I've read about others as well, and not just in trade-related blogs and newsletters - book bloggers are attending and participating in these shows too. SIBA seems to be doing more to welcome bloggers than some of the other bookstore groups, but I hope others will follow their lead!

I'm looking at you, [Southern California Independent Booksellers Association](#)! Your annual [Author Feast and Trade Show](#) is coming in less than two weeks, and I know at least a few book bloggers in our region who would love to work with you and your

member bookstores - talk to us, please! (I have a prior commitment for that date and couldn't attend anyway, but that's not the point...)

24-Hour Readathon/Weekly Geeks:

I was already planning to talk about the Readathon in this week's Salon, but now I can count it for Weekly Geeks too by responding to this week's Readathon Q&A!. (Since *Dewey* founded both WG and the Readathon, it seemed appropriate to combine them.) Geeks want to know:

- * if you are participating in the read-a-thon or not.
Yes, I am signed up as both a Reader and a Cheerleader.
- * if you are, do you have a strategy?
Not really. I'll read a while, take a break, check in with my fellow Readathoners online, maybe have something to eat (depends on what time it is), and then start again. I don't expect to last the full 24 hours, but I do plan to start off at the opening bell (5 AM my time), and I'll be pleased if I can log anywhere from 13 to 17 hours total.
- * do you have a stack of books prepared to read from?
Yes, but since I may change my mind a few times between now and Saturday, I'm not posting a list. While I do plan to write reviews of all my Readathon books, I don't intend to read any "review" books that day. My stack of likely reading choices is mostly YA fiction, light adult fiction, and memoir/essay collections - things that can, hopefully, grab my attention and move quickly, or are easily sampled in between other reading.
- * will you try to read as many books as you can or as many pages as you can?
I'm trying to pick books I think I can actually finish, but other than that, I'm more focused on the overall time spent. I never track pages anyway.
- * do you have special food and snacks planned?
No, not yet. But I probably will drink some coffee in the late afternoon/early evening, which I almost never do.

* do you have a special spot all set up for reading?
I'll probably switch between the sofa recliner
and my armchair with the ottoman.

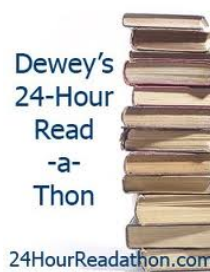
* will you get your Saturday things done on Friday
so you can read guilt free?

Yes! I'm taking the day off from work on
Friday for that very reason.

* if you have others living in your household, do
you have to work around their schedules too?

I have encouraged my family to make plans
without me on Saturday (which is another
reason I'm staying home on Friday).

Are you Readathon-ing too? If you are, and you
haven't participated in Weekly Geeks for awhile
(or ever), this would be a great time to join in and
share your plans!



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Posted by Florinda Posted at 6:00 AM

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File under: book bloggers, randomness, Sunday Salon,
thinking out loud, Weekly Geeks

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2010

That's Enough, Thanks! Songs I never need to hear again

When I think of "songs I never need to
hear again," I don't necessarily mean [songs](#)
[I absolutely can't stand](#). I do my best to
avoid hearing those already, unless they happen
to be on my husband's playlists (I am in the car
listening to you under duress, "A Horse With No
Name"). There are other songs that I don't actively
despise, but in close to 35 years of paying
attention to music, I have heard them *so many*
times I just wouldn't miss them if I never heard
them again.

A sizable number of the songs that fall into this category for me are considered "classic rock," but don't take that to mean I'm not a classic-rock fan in general. I grew up on a lot of that music in the 1970's and early '80's, and many of those songs are lifetime favorites that I've internalized - in a good way. But there are some songs that are just plain *tired* to me, and I'm *tired of* them. I have heard them enough times - or *far more* than enough - to last me the rest of my life. They can go away any time as far as I'm concerned, but they probably won't.

Before I start my list - which will probably not turn out to be comprehensive or definitive - I would like to apologize publicly to [my husband](#) if he's learning of my feelings on some of these songs for the first time via this post, and hope he will not be shocked by them. I honestly can't remember which ones have come up in conversation and which haven't during the last five and a half years.

Pretty much anything by the **Doobie Brothers** (*I know Tall Paul knows about this one*): I don't mind some of their later stuff with Michael McDonald, but if their music all disappeared into the Bermuda Triangle, I probably wouldn't notice or care.

Pretty much anything by **the Doors**: As a 1970's/early '80's teen, I went through a period of fascination with the '60's and what I'd "missed" by not being born ten years earlier; some degree of fascination with the Doors was part of that phase. (And I knew a guy whose aunt had supposedly dated Jim Morrison...) But I've been over that for quite some time, and now their music sounds just sounds really dated to me, so I'm pretty well over it, too.

"Bohemian Rhapsody" by **Queen**: A song I can live without by a band I mostly like. It's probably more popular now than it was originally, thanks to that second life it got from *Wayne's World* (almost 20 years ago now!), but sadly, it's much less popular with me personally.

"Life in the Fast Lane" by **the Eagles**: A song I have been sick of for years, but again, it's by a band I like. The Eagles were the first band whose entire album catalog I owned (back in high school, on vinyl), but this song was never a favorite.

"Hollywood Nights" by **Bob Seger and the Silver Bullet Band**: Come to think of it, this song covers similar ground to "Life in the Fast Lane." Maybe that's why I have similar feelings about it.

"Freebird" by **Lynyrd Skynyrd**: My Southerner card is about to be revoked for this one, but so be it...

"Walk This Way" and "Dude (Looks Like a Lady)" by **Aerosmith**: I'll wait here. *You* can walk that way with that dude if you like, though.

I was curious about what songs other people might feel this way about, and I'd like to thank everyone who filled out the little survey I had posted here for about a week. Y'all knew I'd be sharing your responses, right? I love audience participation!

Carrie @ [Books and Movies](#): "Single Ladies" by Beyoncé (*aw, that's actually one of my embarrassing favorites!*)

Harriet M. Welsch @ [Spynotes](#) and [Bermudaonion](#) (Kathy) : "The Macarena" (*Are they still playing this one at wedding receptions? WHY?*)

Jen @ [The Introverted Reader](#): "Hit the Road, Jack" by Ray Charles

Amused (Leah) @ [Amused by Books](#): "You've Had a Bad Day," by Daniel Powder

[Word Lily](#) (Hannah): The "Wicked Witch Theme" from *The Wizard of Oz*

Literary Feline (Wendy) @ [Musings of a Bookish Kitty](#): "I'm on Fire" by Bruce

Springsteen (*like some of my choices, a song she can't stand from an artist she otherwise likes*)

[@RamsesTMagnum](#): "Fish Heads" by Barnes and Barnes (*...and I admit, sometimes I will start singing this just to annoy him! But thanks for doing the survey and making it official, honey - I know you could have just told me.*)

Anna @ [Diary of an Eccentric](#): "Who Let the Dogs Out" by Baha Men

Molly @ [My Cozy Book Nook](#) and [Sassymonkey](#): "It's a Small World" (*one of the worst earworms of all time, seriously!*)

Michelle @ [That's What She Read](#): "Mickey" by Toni Basil (*also on my "embarrassing favorites" list, I'm embarrassed to say!*)

Jeanne @ [Necromancy Never Pays](#): "Don't Worry, Be Happy" (*The fact that this song is performed completely a cappella by one person is kind of impressive to me. Too bad the song itself is so, well...*)

Mike @ [Everything Under the Sun](#): "Knockin' On Heaven's Door," the Guns'n'Roses cover (*No argument from me. I don't love Bob Dylan's original either, but Warren Zevon's version - from his last album, recorded shortly before he died of lung cancer - is pretty good, if mildly ironic.*)

Suey @ [It's All About Books](#): "Afternoon Delight" by Starland Vocal Band

Swapna @ [S. Krishna's Books](#): "Mambo No. 5" by Lou Bega

Chris @ [Chrisbookarama](#): "Unwritten" by Natasha Bedingfield (*"Stick a fork in it..." she said*)

[@coffeelvmom](#): Anything by the Black Eyed Peas

[@PopandIce](#): "Thriller" by Michael Jackson

[@jfaustus](#): "We Built This City" by Starship

Kim @ [Sophisticated Dorkiness](#): Anything by Ke\$ha (*lucky me - I don't know anything by Ke\$ha*)

The survey's not up any more, but I'm still curious: what song(s) are you so sick of you'd be happy if you never heard it again? (And if you missed yesterday's "[songs you never get tired of hearing](#)," go and weigh in on that too!)



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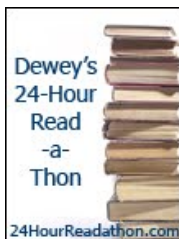
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OCTOBER 9: 24-HOUR READATHON, FALL 2010 EDITION



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